

**FARMERS' MARKET AND LOCAL FOOD PROMOTION PROGRAM  
(FMLFPP)  
Final Performance Report**

The final performance report summarizes the outcome and activities of your FMLFPP award objectives. Failure to submit acceptable closeout reports for an existing grant within 90 calendar days following the grant end date may result in exclusion from future AMS grant opportunities.

This final report will be made available to the public once it is approved by FMLFPP staff. Write the report in a way that promotes your project's accomplishments, as this document will serve as not only a learning tool, but a promotional tool to support local and regional food programs. Particularly, recipients are expected to provide both qualitative and quantitative results to convey the activities and accomplishments of the work.

The report is due **within 90 days** of the project's performance period end date (as noted in box 15 of your grant agreement (AMS-33), or sooner if the project is complete. The report must be typed single-spaced in 11-point font, not to exceed fifteen (15) 8.5 x 11 pages (excluding existing Final Performance Report form content). For example, if the Final Performance Report form is six (6) pages before you begin entering your project information into the form, your report may be up to 21 pages (6 pages + 15 pages).

Provide answers to **each question** and all applicable outcome and indicators as it applies to your project. If you are unable to provide a response explain why. It is preferred that you email your completed performance report to your assigned FMLFPP Grants Management Specialist to avoid delays. In case of any extraordinary reason a faxed report can be accepted; please notify your assigned Grants Management Specialist to inform about your submission.

<b>Report Date Range:</b> <i>(e.g. October 1, 2016 -September 30, 2017)</i>	September 30, 2017 - March 31, 2019
<b>Date Report Submitted</b>	6/18/2019
<b>Grant Agreement Number:</b> <i>(e.g. 14-LFPX-XX-XXXX)</i>	AM170100XXXXG085
<b>Recipient Organization Name:</b>	Missouri Coalition for the Environment
<b>Project Title as Stated on Grant Agreement:</b>	St. Louis Farm to Institution Feasibility Study
<b>Authorized Representative Name:</b>	Heather Navarro
<b>Authorized Representative Phone:</b>	314-727-0600, ext. 110
<b>Authorized Representative Email:</b>	hnavarro@moenviron.org
<b>Year Grant was Awarded:</b>	2017
<b>Amount of Award:</b>	\$45,416

FMLFPP staff may contact you to follow up for long-term success stories. Who may we contact?

- ☐ Same Authorized Representative listed above (check if applicable).
- ☒ Different individual: Name: Melissa Vatterott; Email: mvatterott@moenviron.org; Phone: 314-727-0600, ext. 111

- Executive Summary—In 200 words or less, describe the project's need, purpose, goals, and quantifiable outcomes:

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0581-0287. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 4 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable sex, marital status, or familial status, parental status religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program (not all prohibited bases apply to all programs). Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

This project sought to identify opportunities to develop a systematic connection between St. Louis regional farmers with institutions that have food source needs. Farmers in the MCE network have limited capacity to market their products or to increase deliveries to new buyers. They would benefit from learning about best practices for increasing production, marketing, and deliveries. Institutions are interested in sourcing locally but do not know how to find farmers; many of their current processes make it difficult to source locally. MCE provided farmers with resources on how to obtain buyer-demanded certifications and grants to help them expand capacity. MCE obtained additional funding during the project to begin a marketing program for the MCE farmer network. MCE identified three hospitals, one school district, and 27 restaurants interested in sourcing from these farmers; at least 3 institutional buyers successfully purchased new products during the study. Based on farmer capability and institutional demand, MCE identified 10 products to scale up. MCE identified 9 needs: a farmer communication platform, access to processing kitchens, delivery and distribution system, marketing, financial and mentor support for GAP certification, equipment share and bulk ordering system, new and expanded trainings, land access assistance, and ultimately a food hub.

2. Please provide the approved project's objectives:

Objectives		Completed	
		Yes	No*
1	Assess demand of locally sourced agricultural products from institutions	yes	
2	Assess regulatory demands of farmers with Good Agricultural Practices (GAP)/Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) certification training	yes	
3	Assess available and potential supply from area farmers, including standardization of agricultural products in order to aggregate from farmers of various sizes, defining 10 target agricultural products area farmers can produce to meet the large volume requirement of institutions	yes	
4	Promote farmer narrative to institutions	yes	

*\*If no is selected for any of the listed objectives, you must expand upon this in the challenges section.*

3. List your accomplishments for the project's performance period and indicate how these accomplishments assisted in the fulfillment of your project's objectives. Please include additional objectives approved by FMLFPP during the grant performance period, and highlight the impact that activities had on the project's beneficiaries.

Accomplishments	Relevance to Objective, Outcome, and/or Indicator
Hired Farm Outreach Specialist	Fulfills first activity of objective 1
Established relationships with Food Service Directors, Chefs, Managers, and other staff at Mercy hospital, SSM hospital, BJC hospital, John Cochran VA hospital, Maplewood Richmond Heights School District (MRH), Washington University, University of Missouri at St. Louis, Webster University, Southern Illinois University, several restaurants, and other institutions in our region. Assessed current local food sourcing efforts	Fulfills part of objective 1 by establishing connections with area institutions and learning about their local food needs. Additionally, this fulfills part of outcome 1, indicator 1 with reaching wholesale buyers and informing them of opportunities to buy more local food. Furthermore, outcome 5, indicator 5.a has been furthered by assessing the wholesale buyer's barriers to local foods. This also informs outcome 6, indicator 6.a by discussing the different institutions' ability to

and interest in or demand for expanding this effort from the different institutions.	supplement their existing food service contracts with local food sources that will need separate contract language developed.
Determined the ordering and delivery logistics needs for individual institutions to source more local food. Most institutions have contracts with large food service and distribution companies and request that local food go through their existing contracts with these companies. This would allow the institution to stay within their contractual agreement and to order and accept deliveries of local food through their existing ordering and delivery methods.	Fulfills part of objective 1 by establishing connections with area institutions and determining delivery logistics. Additionally, this fulfills part of outcome 5, indicator 5.a by assessing the distribution and delivery barriers to local foods.
Assessed regulatory demands of farmers from institutions by learning the requirements of the contracted food service and distribution companies and other non-contracted distribution companies that offer locally-grown options. These companies included Sysco, Ole Tyme Produce, Kuna Food Service, Eat Here St. Louis, Bon Appetit, and St. Louis Catering.	Fulfills part of outcome 1, indicator 1 by informing distribution and aggregation companies of opportunities to buy more local food, in addition to objective 2 by assessing regulatory demands, and outcome 5, indicator 5.a by assessing the regulatory barriers to local foods.
<p>Visited with 22 farmers, 19 of those visits being at their farms, attended Fair Shares CCSA winter farmer meeting, and received survey responses from 69 farmers about which agricultural products they could grow most easily in volume and at a competitive price point for institutional purchasing. The 69 farmer survey responses also included responses about their needs to make GAP certification more feasible for them and what resources they need most in order to increase production on their farm to meet institutional demands.</p> <p>Presented the findings of the survey at our August 2018 farmer meeting with over 20 farms present. Hosted another farmer meeting in February 2019 with 25 farmers in attendance and 7 non-farmer food system stakeholders in attendance. This meeting discussed the progress of our findings and our proposed next steps with request of feedback and questions from the farmers in attendance. Topics included the regional marketing brand development to address marketing needs of farmers, launching a farmer google group to address the need for better communication between farmers, our plans for focusing on delivery and distribution assistance and local food processing for farmers in response to these being the main needs farmers reported they had in previous communication.</p>	Fulfills part of objective 3 to strengthen relationships with our region's farmers and work to determine which agricultural products would be the easiest and cheapest for institutions to purchase locally, helping to determine a list of 10 local foods to focus on. Additionally, outcome 1, indicator 1 and outcome 3, indicator 2 were addressed by reaching farmers and ranchers and informing them of new opportunities to sell their local food. Also, outcome 5, indicator 5.a was furthered by assessing the barriers that farmers and ranchers face with selling local food. Also Fulfills part of objective 2 to assess regulatory demands with GAP/FSMA certification training, by helping us understand what additional resources to try and provide farmers on top of the certification training.

Created a top 10 agricultural products list from survey responses from 24 chefs and in person meetings with additional chefs about which locally-grown products they have the most interest in buying more of.	Fulfills part of objective 1 in establishing connections with area institutions and developing a list of desired local foods. Additionally, this fulfills part of outcome 1, indicators 1 and 2 with reaching wholesale buyers, chefs, and culinary professionals and informing them of new opportunities to buy local. Also, outcome 5, indicator 5.a was furthered by assessing some of the barriers that chefs face with sourcing local food.
Offered on-farm GAP mentoring for interested farmers by partnering with Enterprise Analytics. Two farmers took advantage of this service that was offered during a brief period during the end of this grant. Offered a GAP workshop with two expert GAP certified farmers speaking about their experience in becoming GAP certified. The workshop was in December 2018 and in partnership with MU Extension and Lincoln University Cooperative Extension, with 12 attendees. With 11 participants completing an evaluation survey, responses show that 78% of participants increased their knowledge of food safety prevention, detection, control and intervention, more than 50% of participants gained knowledge in food safety skills, 100% gained knowledge in GAP certification, and 95% gained knowledge in FSMA certification.	Primarily fulfills outcome 4, indicators 4.a and 4.b with increasing farmers' knowledge of food safety practices, also fulfills part of objective 2 to assess regulatory demands with GAP/FSMA certification training, also works towards fulfilling Outcome 3, indicator 3.h in educating farmers about available market opportunities for GAP certified farmers.
Executed farm to school marketing campaign plan with Maplewood Richmond Heights school district. The campaign plan included displaying farmer narratives with information on the farmers that grew the local food being served in the cafeteria, passing out handouts and displaying posters with information on the benefits of supporting the local food system, and advertising the local food sourcing to parents, staff, students, and followers on the school's Facebook page.	Fulfills objective 4. Also works to fulfill outcome 1 by providing access to locally-grown food for approximately 300 students and staff of MRH middle and high school.

4. Please list any challenges experienced during the project's period of performance. Provide the corrective actions taken to address these issues.

Challenges (Issues)	Corrective Actions and/or Project Changes (s)
Limited availability and potential supply of locally produced agricultural products that meet the food safety regulations required by most institutions (GAP certified). Several farmers have closed their businesses in the past year and the majority of farmers in business are not interested in obtaining GAP certification to sell to institutional markets.	We worked with fewer farmers than planned to assist with assessing the standardization of agricultural products for institutional purchasing.

It was a challenge to capture detailed information from institutions on future local food purchases due to the immediate barriers most institutions are facing with sourcing local food. The information that was challenging to obtain was: specific volume of local food needed, prices the institutions are willing to pay for local items, and the percentage of the overall budget institutions are willing to spend on local items.	While we were able to collect this information from some institutional buyers and restaurant chefs, we recognize that the majority of institutional food buyers would be more capable of supplying this information if their existing food service and distribution companies had information more regularly available on local options available for sale, volume available, and cost compared to non-local. Therefore, we educated farmers on the opportunity to sell to these institutional buyers and how to become compliant with the regulatory demands of these markets, so the supply of local food can increase. This increase in supply would in turn make it easier for institutional buyers to gauge how much local they can afford to buy, in what volume, and at what price.
Most of the farmers in our region are not interested in GAP certification because of low price points and lack of trust with certain institutional buyers requiring GAP certification, and because of their reluctance to shift away from direct-to-consumer outlets because they highly value individual consumer relationships. The few that are interested have expressed needing additional support through mentorship from farmers who are already GAP certified and funding to make the changes on their farm required by GAP.	We had to cancel GAP training and workshop opportunities due to low registration numbers (fewer than 5).  In order to address the low registration numbers, we hosted a slightly different GAP workshop in December 2018 where two expert GAP certified farmers spoke about their experience becoming GAP certified. Registration for this workshop, which was in partnership with MU Extension and Lincoln University Cooperative Extension, was higher with 12 attendees.
Most farmers in our region are exempt from FSMA or have already gone through the training. There have been several other FSMA trainings in the past year in our bi-state region.	FSMA training opportunities were cancelled due to low registration numbers (less than 5) and due to overall lack of need or interest.
We have been limited in our ability to promote farmer narratives to institutions due to the lack of GAP certified farmers in our region that are capable of selling to institutions.	We have educated institutions on the narratives of farmers in our region, and have executed a marketing plan with Maplewood Richmond Heights school district where farmer narratives were displayed in their cafeteria in spring of 2019.

- Quantify the overall progress on the outcomes and indicators of your project. Include further explanation if necessary.

**Outcome 1: To Increase Consumption of and Access to Locally and Regionally Produced Agricultural Products.**

Indicator	Description	Number
1.	Total number of consumers, farm and ranch operations, or wholesale buyers reached	500+

<b>1.a.</b>	The number that gained knowledge on how to buy or sell local/regional food OR aggregate, store, produce, and/or distribute local/regional food	500+
<b>1.b.</b>	The number that reported an intention to buy or sell local/regional food OR aggregate, store, produce, and/or distribute local/regional food	25
<b>1.c.</b>	The number that reported buying, selling, consuming more or supporting the consumption of local/regional food that they aggregate, store, produce, and/or distribute	10
<b>2.</b>	<b>Total number of individuals (culinary professionals, institutional kitchens, entrepreneurs such as kitchen incubators/shared-use kitchens, etc.) reached</b>	25
<b>2.a.</b>	The number that gained knowledge on how to access, produce, prepare, and/or preserve locally and regionally produced agricultural products	25
<b>2.b.</b>	The number that reported an intention to access, produce, prepare, and/or preserve locally and regionally produced agricultural products	25
<b>2.c.</b>	The number that reported supplementing their diets with locally and regionally produced agricultural products that they produced, prepared, preserved, and/or obtained	0

Many different consumers, farmers, ranchers, and wholesale buyers were reached about MCE's farm to institution efforts throughout the duration of this grant. Outreach to more than 50 wholesale buyers was completed, including food service companies, distribution companies, and institutions such as hospitals, universities, schools and restaurants. Consumers were reached through different speaking engagements such as One STL Sustainability Labs, quarterly St. Louis Food Policy Coalition meetings, and other public-facing events where we discussed farm to institution in St. Louis, reaching at least 55 consumers. The Mercy Hospital farm tour at The Farm at Kraut Run also reached 15 staff members of Mercy Hospital. Over 100 farmers and ranchers were notified and invited to join in the farm to institution work being lead by MCE. With the farm to school marketing campaign MCE did with MRH school district, over 300 students and staff were reached with access to locally-grown food in their cafeteria, along with educational materials on the importance of supporting the local food system. All of this outreach included educating consumers, wholesale buyers, farmers, and ranchers on how to buy or sell locally-grown food.

The total number of people reached referenced in the table above does not include our reach on social media. Several social media outlets were used to discuss the farm to institution work being done at MCE: MCE and the St. Louis Food Policy Coalition's Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. In completing a thorough evaluation of the number of engagements, impressions, and likes in response to posts about farm to institution efforts, we reached over 50,000 people through social media. These posts included communicating the local food sourcing done at MRH school district, connections made between farmers and restaurants or other institutions, and educating followers on who their farmers are and where to purchase their products. Further, MCE is a member of the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (NSAC) which reached over 1,500 people with a blog post about MCE's farm to school work with MRH.

Of the wholesale buyers MCE spoke with, at least 30 restaurants, large institutions, and distribution companies expressed interest in and intention to purchase more locally-grown products. An additional 10 restaurants, large institutions, and distribution companies reported buying and selling more locally-grown product as a result of MCE's farm to institution work. MCE reached 25 chefs that all expressed intention to purchase locally-grown products in response to MCE educating them on the opportunity to help with coordinating purchases with

farmers. MCE did not speak with individual chefs or other culinary professionals about their individual diets (2.c.) as this farm to institution work was focused on reaching larger audiences such as restaurant customers with locally-grown products.

**Outcome 2: Increase Customers and sales of local and regional agricultural products.**

Indicator	Description	Number
<b>1.</b>	<b>Sales increased as a result of marketing and/or promotion activities during the project performance period.</b>	<b>NA</b>
	Original Sales Amount (in dollars)	
	Resulted Sales Amount (in dollars)	
	Percent Change $((n_{\text{final}} - n_{\text{initial}})/n_{\text{initial}}) * 100 = \% \text{ change}$	
<b>2.</b>	<b>Customer counts increased during the project performance period.</b>	<b>NA</b>
	Original Customer Count	
	Resulted Customer Count	
	Percent Change $((n_{\text{final}} - n_{\text{initial}})/n_{\text{initial}}) * 100 = \% \text{ change}$	

**Outcome 3: Develop new market opportunities for farm and ranch operations serving local markets.**

Indicator	Description	Number
<b>1.</b>	<b>Number of new and/or existing delivery systems/access points of those reached that expanded and/or improved offerings of</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>1.a.</b>	Farmers markets	NA
<b>1.b.</b>	Roadside stands	NA
<b>1.c.</b>	Community supported agriculture programs	NA
<b>1.d.</b>	Agritourism activities	NA
<b>1.e.</b>	Other direct producer-to-consumer market opportunities	NA
<b>1.f.</b>	Local and regional Food Business Enterprises that process, aggregate, distribute, or store locally and regionally produced agricultural products	8

At least 8 distribution or access points for selling locally-grown food expanded or improved their offerings as a result of the work done in this grant: Eat Here St. Louis, Fair Shares CCSA, Fresh Rx, Local Harvest Grocery, Foodshed.io, Schnucks Grocery, Kuna Food Service, and Ole Tyme Produce.

Indicator	Description	Number
<b>2.</b>	<b>Number of local and regional farmers and ranchers, processors, aggregators, and/or distributors that reported</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>2.a.</b>	An increase in revenue expressed in dollars	NA
<b>2.b.</b>	A gained knowledge about new market opportunities through technical assistance and education programs	16
<b>3.</b>	<b>Number of</b>	
<b>3.a.</b>	New rural/urban careers created (Difference between "jobs" and "careers": jobs are net gain of paid employment; new businesses created or adopted can indicate new careers)	NA
<b>3.b.</b>	Jobs maintained/created	0.5
<b>3.c.</b>	New beginning farmers who went into local/regional food production	NA
<b>3.d.</b>	Socially disadvantaged farmers who went into local/regional food production	NA
<b>3.e.</b>	Business plans developed	NA

The results of a survey completed at our February 2019 farmer meeting showed that 16 farmers and ranchers reported gaining knowledge about new market opportunities through MCE's farm to institution work. The

number of farmers and ranchers reached with information about new market opportunities is over 100 farmers and ranchers, however the number we have that reported on this is 16.

The part-time Local Food Coordinator position created to lead this farm to institution work at MCE is being maintained beyond the grant's completion.

**Outcome 4: Improve the food safety of locally and regionally produced agricultural products.**

*Only applicable to projects focused on food safety!*

Indicator	Description	Number
1.	Number of individuals who learned about prevention, detection, control, and intervention food safety practices	12
2.	Number of those individuals who reported increasing their food safety skills and knowledge	6
3.	Number of growers or producers who obtained on-farm food safety certifications (such as Good Agricultural Practices or Good Handling Practices)	0

Most of the GAP and FSMA training and workshops that were scheduled as part of this grant were cancelled or rescheduled due to low registration and overall lack of interest. We adjusted the agenda for a workshop in December 2018 and had an increase in registration. For this workshop, we gave an overview of and compared the differences between GAP and FSMA and brought in two recently GAP-certified farmers to speak about their experience with becoming GAP certified and their knowledge of FSMA, and to answer questions farmers in the audience had about either food safety certification.

At this workshop, 11 farmers completed a survey and reported that they learned about prevention, detection, control, and intervention food safety practices, and an increase in their food safety skills and knowledge. Following this workshop, 2 farmers (one of which was at the workshop) participated in on-farm GAP readiness mentoring sessions. Both of these farmers are in the process of becoming GAP certified but neither have completed the certification.

**Outcome 5: To establish or expand a local and regional food business enterprise.**

Indicator	Description	Number
5.a.	Number of unmet consumer needs, barriers to local foods, unserved populations, etc. identified through the use of a comprehensive needs assessment when developing a plan to establish or expand a local and regional food business enterprise.	6
5.b.	Number of plans for establishing or expanding a local and regional food business enterprise developed based on a comprehensive needs assessment.	NA
5.c.	Amount of non-Federal financial, professional, and technical assistance measured in dollars secured as a result of the developed plan(s) to establish or expand a local and regional food business enterprise.	NA

The predominant unmet needs and barriers to local food that have been identified are 1) lack of education on why local matters, 2) lack of awareness of opportunities to buy or sell locally produced goods, 3) concerns around reliability of local food producers and local food purchasers, 4) concerns regarding obtaining GAP certification, 5) concerns around the price needed and offered for locally produced goods, and 6) the inconsistency of volume available with locally produced goods.

More information is outlined in Key Findings on page 14 below or in our [St. Louis Farm to Institution Feasibility Study](#), which is provided along with this report.



**Outcome 6: To determine capacity within the system for increased purchasing and supplying of local products**

Indicator	Description	Number
6.a.	Number of institutions who are capable of supplementing their existing food service contracts with food from outside local sources that will need contract language developed for these separate transactions	0
6.b.	Number of farmers who have products or are willing to grow/raise the products desired by institutions that will need to develop contracts to ensure their products are bought by the institutions if they plant/raise accordingly	0

As learned through this grant period, most institutions are not willing to source from farmers separately; they want the farmers to work with the institutions' food service providers. Further, the specific institutions and farmers we spoke with were not desiring contracts for their local food buying or selling. The institutions that are interested in or capable of supplementing their food with local will or are doing so without the need of a contract.

6. Discuss your community partnerships (include applicant staff and external partners).

- i. **Who were your community partners?** Our community partners include many of the organizations in the St. Louis Food Policy Coalition (STLFPC). Initial partners were the owners of Fair Shares CCSA (Fair Shares), and the University of Missouri Extension (MU Extension). Our partnerships expanded to include many other organizations such as Eat Here St. Louis (Eat Here), HOSCO, St. Louis Earth Day, Operation Food Search (OFS), Lincoln University Extension (LUCE), Washington University, Slow Food St. Louis, Gateway Greening, EarthDance Organic Farm, City Greens Market, Sprouthood, Link Market, Good Life Growing, Missouri and Illinois Farmers Union, Foodshed.io, and the Industrial and Manufacturing Systems Engineering Program at the University of Missouri.
- ii. **How did they contribute to the overall results of the FMLFPP project?** These organizations have 1) provided feedback on the barriers they, farmers, and local food purchasers face and 2) informed our next steps and how to address the local farm to institution needs of our region. HOSCO, St. Louis Earth Day, Sprouthood, and Good Life Growing formed a committee in STLFPC to address feedback regarding the need for a regional brand to market and promote farmers, their products, and the places that sell their products. Eat Here St. Louis and St. Louis Earth Day assisted with identifying restaurant chefs and owners that may be interested in buying more locally-grown food and discussing their current food sourcing obstacles with MCE. They also helped distribute the chef survey MCE created to receive chef feedback. In partnering with Foodshed.io, we have connected them with the GAP certified farmers in our farmer network for a pilot program with Schnucks grocery stores where they have been connecting the farmers with Schnucks to increase the supply of local food from these farmers in their stores in the St. Louis region. Slow Food St. Louis, MU Extension, LUCE, Fair Shares, Missouri and Illinois Farmers Union, EarthDance Organic Farm, and Eat Here attended STLFPC workgroup meetings that support farm to institution efforts, and helped us spread the word to area farmers about our farm to institution work and about the farmer survey sent out in the summer of 2018. Fair Shares also helped with administering our farmer survey, recruiting farmers to our two regional farmer meetings, working to determine the potential supply from area farmers including defining the top 10 agricultural products that farmers can produce to meet the volume requirement of institutions, consideration of how the standardization process and delivery logistics would work once we are implementing farm to institution, and strategizing next steps after identifying nine needs to build up the local food supply chain. MU Extension and LUCE both helped with planning and recruiting farmers for the GAP/FSMA

workshops and co-led the one GAP/FSMA workshop we hosted. Staff and a graduate student from the Department of Industrial and Manufacturing Systems Engineering at University of Missouri at Columbia helped MCE to model potential regional drop off points for farmers in the St. Louis foodshed where their products could then be delivered into St. Louis. Eat Here and Fair Shares also met with MCE regularly throughout the last six months of the project period to determine how these two businesses could increase their capacity to address some of the needs identified by farmers to build up the local food economy.

- iii. **How will they continue to contribute to your project's future activities, beyond the performance period of this FMLFPP grant?** The nine identified needs from this project require the continued coordination with Fair Shares and Eat Here, two aggregators in the St. Louis region that work with farmers in MCE's network. They will continue to learn from the farmers they buy products from what barriers they face and work with MCE to determine strategies to address those barriers, namely delivery and distribution assistance and local food processing assistance. St. Louis Earth Day will continue to be a connector between restaurant chefs she works with and MCE to allow MCE to continue to recruit restaurants to buy more from farmers in the MCE network. The members of the committee that developed the regional marketing brand for farmers will continue to support outreach and promotion of the program, now established as Known & Grown STL. MCE and STLFPC allies will continue to provide support in strategizing to advance the needs identified during the project and outreach to other important stakeholders who can assist with addressing those needs. MU Extension and LUCE are also members of STLFPC and are available for continued strategizing after the project period about how best to address the needs identified in the project.
- iv. **What feedback have the partners provided (specific comments) about the results of the project?** Partners say the work we are doing is important and they are glad we are doing it because they do not have the time and capacity to do it themselves. Eat Here is open to expanding their business to take on institutional buyers and exploring how to offer lower prices for food outlets such as the Link Market and City Greens Market so they can purchase from them. Fair Shares has shared that they see an importance in developing programming that helps connect new farmers with retiring farmers since many of the farmers in our region are within 5-10 years of retiring and aren't suited to take on new food safety and growing methods that come along with selling to institutional buyers. Operation Food Search (OFS) has launched their Fresh Rx program with Fair Shares and are planning to source locally-grown products for this program. OFS has also expressed interest in accessing a processing facility so they are able to offer locally-grown ready-to-eat options in their Fresh Rx and backpack programs. Washington University has also expressed interest in having access to a processing facility so they can increase their opportunities to source local food, such as being able to capture foods that are produced during the summer months when their university is closed. MU Extension and LUCE have provided feedback on the lack of interest from farmers in their networks in obtaining GAP certification for selling to institutional buyers. The Link Market and City Greens Market have provided feedback on how their businesses would fit into a farm to institution infrastructure plan.

7. How do you plan to publicize the results?

- i. **To whom (i.e. people, entities) do you plan to publicize the project results?** Farmers, MCE members, STLFPC member organizations, local government officials, area institutions we have worked with, the Farm to University network, local news outlets, and members of the public concerned about food system issues.
- ii. **When do you plan to publicize the results?** We have been and will continue to publicize the project results through emails, social media, and in person meetings. The results of the project are summarized in a report form, [\*The St. Louis Farm to Institution Feasibility Study\*](#), available on our website. We have been sharing and will continue to share the report and the report summary through social media, at community events, and through presentations. We have also shared the report and report summary through email to elected officials, area institutions, and

numerous local media outlets. We have also discussed the results of the project on a few local radio shows.

\*If you have publicized the results, please send any publicity information (brochures, announcements, newsletters, etc.) electronically along with this report. Non-electronic promotional items should be digitally photographed and emailed with this report (do not send the actual item).

8. Have you collected any feedback from your community and additional stakeholders about your work?
  - i. **If so, how did you collect the information?** Yes, we have received mostly verbal and some email communicated feedback on our work from farmers and from local food partners/stakeholders during our in person meetings.
  - ii. **What feedback was relayed (specific comments)?** Through our work with farmers in the St. Louis foodshed, we have received positive feedback from a couple of farmers grateful for our work to help them reach more markets and grow their businesses. Green Finned Hippy Farm emailed us in November 2018 stating, "I appreciate all that you do for us, not just our farm, but for us meaning the local food movement! We appreciate all of the connections that you have sent our way. I think that you and your team add such a valuable function to our food system and we would not be able to do what we do without your help." Local food stakeholders told us they are grateful for the work we have been doing to lift up the local food economy, ensuring to capture input from growers, aggregators, small institutions, large institutions, and other local food buyers before strategizing next steps for the region.

9. Budget Summary:

- i. As part of the LFPP closeout procedures, you are required to submit the SF-425 (Final Federal Financial Report). Check here if you have completed the SF-425 and are submitting it with this report: ☐XYes
- ii. Did the project generate any income? ☐XYes ☐ No
  - a. If yes, \$ generated and how was it used to further the objectives of this project? GAP workshop attendees paid a \$10 registration fee. The total registration fees collected were \$210. These fees were used to offset GAP workshop stipends paid to Double Star Farms, (\$120.00) and to Pin Oak Farms (\$90.00 of his \$120.00 stipend).
- iii. In the table below include the total amount of **federal funds spent** during the grant performance period (**Do not** include matching or in-kind contributions):

Categories	Amount Approved in Budget	Actual Federal Expenditures (Federal Funds ONLY)
Personnel:	\$27,000.00	\$33,055.34
Fringe:	\$5,940.00	\$2,069.39
Contractual:	\$7,450.00	\$7,950.00
Equipment:		
Travel:	\$826.00	\$738.49
Supplies:	\$4,200.00	\$619.73
Other:		\$630.00
Indirect Costs:		
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$45,416</b>	<b>\$45,062.95</b>

- iv. **ONLY for LFPP recipients:** Provide the amount of matching funds/in-kind contributions used during the grant performance period.

Categories	Match Approved in Budget	Actual Match Expenditures
Personnel:	\$7,400.00	\$8,840.86
Fringe:	\$1,628.00	\$1,631.87
Contractual:	\$1,575.00	\$1,995.00

Equipment:		
Travel:		
Supplies:		
Other:		
Indirect Costs:	\$4,536.00	\$4,521.52
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$15,139.00</b>	<b>\$16,989.25</b>

#### 10. Lessons Learned:

- i. **Summarize any lessons learned. They should draw on positive experiences (e.g. good ideas that improved project efficiency or saved money) and negative experiences (e.g. what did not go well and what needs to be changed).** Finding sponsors for food and beverage for farmers to come together and share their input on our work helps draw a larger crowd. We learned very early on in our project that farmers really needed help with marketing their farms, their practices, and their products to draw buyers to source from them; we were fortunate to share this need with a local private foundation in St. Louis who was willing to offer funding for us to develop a marketing program for the farmers before the project period ended. Farmers in our network truly are not interested in GAP certification and so we focused much of our attention on helping connect them to smaller institutions such as restaurants that do not require GAP. This strategy proved to be fruitful as we were able to connect farmers in the MCE network to a couple new restaurant buyers during the project period.
- ii. **If goals or outcome measures were not achieved, identify and share the lessons learned to help others expedite problem-solving:** The goals and outcome measures that were hard to achieve are all based around GAP certification. There is a lack of supply of GAP certified product available in the St. Louis foodshed and at the same time nearly all institutions we spoke with require local food to have this certification before it can be purchased. The lessons learned that may help others that are looking into farm to institution work would be to assess the number of farmers that are currently GAP certified, assess who in the area is offering GAP-certification workshops and mentoring, and assess how many institutions require GAP certification for their purchases. This information would provide a snapshot of how big of a barrier GAP will be to the success of farm to institution in that region. If there is an organization present and GAP certified farmers present that are willing and able to educate farmers on how to become GAP certified in a way that is easier and less expensive than expected, this will greatly improve the region's chances of being successful in farm to institution.
- iii. **Describe any lessons learned in the administration of the project that might be helpful for others who would want to implement a similar project:** Finding restaurants that already support the local farmers you work with to sponsor/provide discounted meals for farmer meetings is really helpful; the food incentivizes farmers to attend, and with most people, feeding them provides for more energy for conversation. Working with multiple organizations to distribute surveys to farmers or buyers in a region helps amplify the amount of feedback you can receive. Never hesitate to ask universities if they have students who may want to assist with research or modeling for an aspect of your project where you lack capacity or skill set to conduct further investigation/exploration. Students are often motivated to assist with a project and work especially hard on a project when they know their results will inform a real life situation.
- iv. **Discuss if and how the result of this project can be adapted to other regions, communities, and/or agricultural systems.** Given that the Missouri Department of Agriculture and Missouri legislature have indicated that they believe supporting local food purchases from Missouri farmers is important, cities across Missouri are feeling welcomed to pursue ways to make this work. We believe the results of this project will be useful for other cities in Missouri interested in building up their own local food supply chain, such as Columbia, Springfield, and Joplin. Other cities that are near St. Louis that could also benefit from learning how we conducted this project include Springfield and Carbondale in Illinois. We are already working with organizations in both places to ensure that our strategies are helpful and not duplicative to existing efforts in those cities.

11. Future Work:

- i. **How will you continue the work of this project beyond this grant? In other words, how will you implement the results of your project's work to benefit future community goals and initiatives? Include information about community impact and outreach, anticipated increases in markets and/or sales, estimated number of jobs retained/created, and any other information you'd like to share about the future of your project.** As the convening, backbone organization of the St. Louis Food Policy Coalition, we will continue to work with our partners to move the nine identified recommended next steps forward as best we can with our partners. MCE is applying for the LFPP implementation grant because of the organization's unique position to carry forth the work and as a known leader in the industry in the region.
- ii. **Do you have any recommendations for future activities and, if applicable, an outline of next steps or additional research that might advance the project goals?** During the 18-month LFPP performance period, MCE's Local Food Coordinator and Food & Farm Director, in cooperation with the St. Louis Food Policy Coalition (STLFPC), conducted feasibility activities of the farm to institution supply chain in the St. Louis foodshed. Our key findings, recommended actions, and essential next steps are outlined below:

Key findings from the performance period are as follows:

1. Most large institutions are not ready to take on local product from the MCE farmer network due to requirements from their food service providers that most of the farmers cannot meet.
2. Small institutions (restaurants) are more capable of and many are already sourcing from farms in the MCE network.
3. It is critical to work with existing aggregators and distributors in the foodshed already moving local product to determine the future of farm to table operations.
4. There is an increased demand for local products grown with environmentally responsible practices from individual consumers and all types of buyers. The region needs better ways to communicate how to buy these products.
5. Challenges in becoming GAP certified include financial burdens and operational changes required for obtaining certification. However, because GAP certification is required by most large institutions, sale of local products to large institutions is impacted.
6. Farmers need a variety of resources in order to ultimately sell to both small and large institutions and run more profitable businesses overall in the St. Louis foodshed.
7. The region will ultimately need a food hub that aggregates local product from a number of farmers throughout the region in order to have a successful local food supply chain. However, the immediate needs outlined in the Feasibility Study must be addressed first in order for the St. Louis foodshed to be ready for a food hub within the next five years.
8. Recommendations in the Feasibility Study must be advanced with all types of buyers and the following 3 types of farmers: new and aspiring, small-scale (10 acres or less) that use environmentally-responsible practices, and mid-scale (larger than 10 acres that often use chemical spray).

As a result of these findings, MCE and partners have already moved forward the following:

1. Fair Shares, Eat Here, and MCE have identified ways each entity can work to advance the local food economy based on the findings above. These entities are seeking the Known & Grown implementation grant to move those efforts forward.
2. MCE established a Google Group for farmers to join to address their initial need to better communicate about best practices, share resources, and learn from Fair Shares and Eat Here about needs for particular products.
3. MCE recently established the Known & Grown STL marketing program to help celebrate environmentally responsible farmers in the Partner Network and raise awareness about these farmers to individual consumers and restaurant, retail, and institutional businesses.
4. 2 farms have already participated in on-farm evaluations with Enterprise Analytics to learn what they may need to do, if anything, on their farm to become GAP certified.

Based on input from farmers and other food system stakeholders, we recommend the following next steps be taken to implement a strong local food economy through increasing supplies to restaurant, retail, and institutional businesses, with the top 3 needs identified by farmers listed first:

1. Develop delivery and distribution assistance program to reach farmers within the St. Louis foodshed currently unable to move product to St. Louis but have product demanded by St. Louis restaurant, retail, and institutional buyers.
2. Expand the Known & Grown STL marketing program to maximize its impact for farmers in the Partner Network in terms of creating more demand for their product and increase sales.
3. Partner with existing commercial kitchens to process locally-grown products into frozen, canned, and prepared foods that Eat Here and Fair Shares can distribute to their end customers and to make available for schools or hospitals interested in sourcing more local ingredients.
4. Approve upon farmer to farmer communication methods after determining the effectiveness of the MCE Google Group for the Partner Network.
5. Increase funding to support GAP Certification of farmers in the Partner Network to make them eligible to sell to large institutions that require GAP certification.
6. Establish a rental equipment and bulk ordering program for farmers.
7. Coordinate with existing training and education programming for farmers in the region and expand those programs to include training on how to grow for wholesale markets.
8. Increase access to land for beginning farmers and farmers of color.
9. Eventually develop a business plan for a regional food hub after supporting existing aggregators and distributors in St. Louis to expand their businesses, which will inform what activities a regional food hub would conduct that would complement the work of the existing aggregators and distributors.